


"It came so close to being gone forever. My grandfather built his last canoe in 1920."

Steve Cayard, a self-taught birch bark canoe maker. He apprenticed to Cayard in 1999 and 2000, and assisted Cayard at the Wooden Boat School in Brooklin. Working together they documented and restored many historic canoes. "He is a well of knowledge, and I think it is a beautiful gesture for him to share this with native people," says Bridges.

Bridges says the award will help him expand the range of styles he works in. He intends to visit museums and study some of the older styles and techniques for making birchbark canoes and baskets. Most of all, he is mindful of how close the art came to being gone forever. Sylvester Gabriel built his last canoe in 1920, for the tricentennial of Plymouth Plantation and Bridges wants to make sure it never comes that close to dying out again. 

One Traditional Arts Fellowship will be awarded annually by the Maine Arts Commission, with the next deadline for applications on June 29, 2007. Artists interested in the Traditional Arts Fellowship may contact Keith Ludden, 207/287-2713, keith.ludden@maine.gov or  TTY/NexTalk 877/887-3878 User ID: keith.ludden.



(LEFT) David Moses Bridges paddles a birchbark canoe in the Passamaquoddy Bay.

(ABOVE) Birch basket by David Moses Bridges.

(BOTTOM RIGHT) Birchbark canoe, David Moses Bridges, Perry, ME.

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